

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for obtaining credits from a bartering group and for converting the credits to credits for playing games, or for awarding or redeeming coupons or prizes, awards and the like, the method comprising the steps of:
 - a. pre-qualifying a user;
 - b. obtaining a first amount of barter units for the user from a barter network;
 - c. converting the first amount of barter units to an amount of credits for the user;
 - d. storing the amount of credit in a user's account on a gaming server; and
 - e. enabling gaming for the user on the gaming server.
2. The method of claim 1, including the step of adding any user's credit winnings to the amount of credit in the user's account on the gaming server.
3. The method of claim 1, including the step of deducting any user's credit losses from the amount of credit in the user's account on the gaming server.
4. The method of claim 1, including the step of re-converting a remaining amount of credit in the user's account on the gaming server into a second amount of barter units.
5. The method of claim 4, including the step of returning the second amount of barter units to the barter network.

6. The method of claim 5, further including the step of zeroing out the user's account on the gaming server after the step of returning the second amount of barter units to the barter network.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of pre-qualifying the user comprises verifying the user's age.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein the user directly contacts a gaming controller located on the gaming server.
9. The method of claim 8, wherein the gaming controller is located at a specified domain name on a global network.
10. The method of claim 9, wherein the global network is the Internet.
11. The method of claim 1, wherein the user directly contacts the barter network to provide authorization for the barter network to send a specific portion of the first amount of barter units to the gaming server.
12. The method of claim 1, wherein the user provides identifying information directly to the gaming server to authorize the gaming server to withdraw a specific portion of the first amount of barter units from the barter network.
13. The method of claim 12, wherein the authorization is encrypted.
14. A system to link barter units belonging to a user with credits, such that the user can obtain credits to play games or can be awarded or can redeem coupons, awards, prizes or other remuneration, comprising:
 - a. one or more barter networks;
 - b. a gaming server that accepts and exchanges barter units into credits; and

- c. means for linking the barter network to the gaming server for connecting a user or users of the barter network to the gaming server.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein the means for linking the barter network to the gaming server is a personal computer (PC) with a data-transmitting link.
16. The system of claim 15, wherein the data transmitting link is the Internet.
17. The system of claim 14, wherein the means for linking the barter network to the gaming server is a card that carries data from the barter network to the gaming server.
18. The system of claim 14, wherein the barter network is linked to the gaming server through a global exchange.
19. The system of claim 14, including a means for assigning a user a unique account, and means for storing the user's unique account information on the gaming server.
20. The system of claim 19, wherein the means for storing the user's account information on the gaming server comprises a means for indexing the user's account information to player identification data.
21. The system of claim 20, further comprising a means for accumulating player reward points that are associated with the player identification data.
22. A system to link barter units belonging to a user with credits, such that the user can obtain credits to play games or to be awarded or redeem coupons, prizes or other remuneration, comprising:
 - a. at least one barter network associated with at least one user, the barter network having a first account storage means and a barter network

controller;

- b. a barter global exchange, the barter global exchange having an exchange controller and being linked to the barter network; and
- c. a gaming server having a second account storage means and a gaming controller, the gaming server being linked to the user and to the barter global exchange,

wherein the user has an account in the barter network in barter units, and the barter network is a member of the global exchange.

23. A method for obtaining credits from a bartering group and for converting the credits to credits for playing games, or for awarding or redeeming coupons or prizes, awards or other remuneration, the method comprising the steps of:

- a. pre-qualifying a user having identifying information by providing the identifying information to a gaming server;
- b. obtaining a first barter unit value for the user;
- c. converting the first barter unit value to an amount of credits for the user;
- d. storing the amount of credit in a user's unique account on the gaming server; and
- f. enabling gaming for the user on the gaming server;
- g. adding any winnings to the user's account on the gaming server;
- h. deducting any losses from the user's account on the gaming server; and

re-converting the amount of credit remaining in the user's account on the gaming server to a second barter unit value.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein at least a portion of the second barter unit value is sent to a barter network.
25. The method of claim 23, wherein at least a portion of the second barter unit value is sent to a barter global exchange.
26. The method of claim 23, wherein at least a portion of the second barter unit value is kept in the user's account on the gaming server.